

HB 5050, An Act Concerning Modernizing Parking Signs for People with Disabilities

Monday February 22, 2016

Government, Administration and Elections Committee (GAE)

Written Testimony Submitted by: Jeannine Marron, 6 West Tract Road, Cromwell, CT 06416

Title: Parent of child with Autism, Hypotonia, Developmental Coordination Disorder,  
and Sensory Integration Disorder

Statement of Support:

Dear Committee Members,

I apologize I am unable to present this information in-person to you today. I am writing as a parent of a child with multiple disabilities, and as a mom who purposely encourages our family to be as active and mobile as possible, despite our challenges. I want to stress how important modernizing handicap parking signs is to my family, the disability community and to all citizens of Connecticut. The reasons I urge you to change the icon and wording on these signs are as follows:

- *Not all disabilities are visible* – Not all individuals and families that use handicap parking spaces have disabilities that necessitate the use of a wheelchair. Limited mobility or challenged mobility persons, may be able to walk with or without an assistive device. However, reserved parking is still necessary. Speaking for my family specifically, my son's coordination disorder, low muscle tone, muscle weakness and decreased endurance affect his ability to walk. Because of my son's autism, he has poor safety awareness and an inclination to wander or bolt in open space, particularly if said space is noisy or crowded. Handicap parking spaces physically diminish the opportunity and likelihood my son could be struck by a vehicle en route to our destination. This converts a potentially dangerous situation into an average trip to the grocery store.
- *Empowerment* - A sign with a leaning forward wheelchair implies "in motion." In motion is often synonymous to "progressing." There is nothing more empowering to the disability community than a collective belief that society is progressing in terms of their acceptance of those with diverse disabilities. Changing the words "handicap" to "reserved" illustrates the *state's respect and consideration* for those with mobility issues.

***Please vote in favor of this bill.***

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, or would like more information on accessibility, or lack thereof, impacts our family, please contact me:

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